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tive of important results. What does not science owe to investigations which, though continued to the end of time, could never have conducted to the proposed object of research ! Of the practicability of establishing a Congress of Nations which shall answer the purposes in question, we do not, however, here intend to express any opinion. At some future opportunity we may resume the subject.

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#### ARTICLE IV.

#### CRITICAL NOTICES.

BY THE EDITOR.

1. *Fanaticism ; By the Author of Natural History of Enthusiasm. New-York : Jonathan Leavitt, 1834.*

THIS is a republication of an English work. It is too well known in this country to require any analysis at our hands. We shall notice only a single chapter, and that, because its subject falls within the scope of this journal. We allude to the Chapter on the Alliance of the Malign Emotions with the Imagination. The author supposes the imagination to have had a moderating and refining effect upon these emotions ; that although it has given the appearance of virtue to their exercise, and thus sometimes been the cause of war, it has still “softened and relieved it in its attendant horrors.” Thus, in the absence of the genuine principles of morals, imaginative sentiments, false and spurious as they are, the author supposes, have had, on the whole, a beneficial influence. He says :—

“If nature denies to the irascible passions any attendant sense of pleasure, she absolutely refuses them also, at least in their simple state, the power of awakening the sympathy, or of exciting the admiration of those who witness their ebullition. These harsh elements of the moral system must be taken into combination with sentiments of a different, and a happier order, and must almost be

concealed within such sentiments, before they can assume any sort of beauty, or appear in splendor. That such combinations do actually take place, and in conformity, too, with the intentions of nature, is true; but it is true also, that by the very means of the mixture, the worse or rancorous element is vastly moderated and refined. Let it be granted, for example, that wars have often originated in the military ambition and false thirst of glory to which certain gorgeous sentiments give an appearance of virtue. This may be true, but can we easily estimate the degree in which war universally has been softened and relieved in its attendant horrors, by the corrective influence of these very mixed emotions, extravagant and false as they are? And is it certain that there would have been altogether less bloodshed on earth, if mere sanguinary rage, and if the cupidity of empire, had been left to work their ends alone? For every thousand victims immolated at the altar of martial pride, have not ten thousand been rescued by the noble and generous usages that have belonged to the system of warfare among all civilized nations? Surely it may be said that, unless the imaginative sentiments had thus blended themselves with the destructive passions, the ambition of men would have been like that of fiends, and the human family must long ago have suffered extermination.

“Ideas of chivalrous virtue and of royal magnanimity (ideas directly springing from the imagination) much more than any genuine sentiments of humanity, have softened the ferocious pride of mighty warriors. For though it may be true that some sparks or rare flashes of mere compassion have, once and again, gleamed from the bosoms of such men; yet, assuredly, if good will to their fellows had been more than a transient emotion, the sword would never have been their toy. But the imaginative sentiments are a middle power, in the hands of nature, which, because they may be combined more readily than some higher principles with the gross and dark ingredients of the human mind, serve so much the better to chasten or ameliorate what cannot be quite expelled. Except for emotions of this order, Alexander would have been as Tamerlane; and Tamerlane as the Angel of Death.”

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“Although it may be true, and we confidently assume it to be so, that a beneficial mitigation and refinement of the grosser elements of our nature accrues from their alliance with imaginative sentiments, yet it does by no means follow that such sentiments ought to supplant the genuine principles of morals, wherever these may take effect. No one would maintain such a doctrine in the abstract; nevertheless, when we turn to the real world, we find that true virtue and piety have always had to contend (and often with little success) against those splendid forms of excellence which are but vice in disguise, and which owe all their specious graces and fair colors to the admixture we are speaking of.

“The unalterable maxims of rectitude, purity and mercy, such as we find them in the Scriptures, being well understood and firmly instated in their just authority, then indeed we may allow the imagination to take the part that belongs to it as the general cement—or as the common medium of the various ingredients of animal, social, and intellectual life. There meets us, however, a special difficulty in assigning its proper office to this faculty when it comes to mingle itself, as it really does, with the malign emotions; and this embarrassment is much enhanced by those modes of feeling which are found to have got possession of every lettered people. How large a portion of the pleasurable excitement that attends the reading of history springs directly from the recommendations which vindictive or inexorable passions borrow from imaginative emotions! Then in the world of fiction—dramatic or poetic, perhaps half of the power which such creations possess over the mind is attributable to the same cause. The moralist and the preacher (especially when he has to do with the educated classes) and if he would discharge his office without showing favor to inveterate prejudices, finds that he has to loosen many of the most cherished associations of sentiment, and must denounce as purely evil very much that is passionately admired, and will be eagerly emulated.

“To affirm in absolute and exclusive terms that the irascible passions ought in no case to be allowed to blend with the imagination, so as may fit them to enkindle emotions of pleasure or admiration, would be going very far, and might bring an argument into serious embarrassments. We stop short, then, of so stern a conclusion, and shall urge only this more general rule, that the principles of benevolence, and of forbearance, and meekness, and gentleness, and humility, as taught in the discourses of Christ, and as enforced by his apostles, should in all instances to which they are clearly applicable, be carried fully home, notwithstanding the repugnance of certain modes of feeling commonly honored as generous and noble; and moreover that every one professing obedience to the Gospel should exercise an especial vigilance toward that entire class of sentiments over which profane history, romance, poetry, and the drama, have shed a glory.

“The time, perhaps, shall come—nay, we devoutly expect it, when by the universal diffusion of a sound and pure Ethics—the ethics of the Bible, no room shall be left, no need shall be felt for the chastening influence which hitherto the imagination has exerted over the ferocious dispositions of mankind. Yes, an age shall come, when the gods and heroes of history shall hasten to those shades of everlasting forgetfulness which have closed upon their patrons—the gods and heroes of mythology. In the same day the charm of fiction shall be dissolved, and the gaudiness of *false sentiment*, in all kinds, shall be looked at with the cold contempt which now we bestow upon the follies of *false worship*. Then, too, the

romance (as well practical as literary) of this nineteenth century shall be bound in the bundle that contains the decayed and childish fables of olden times, and both together shall be consigned, without heed or regret, to sheer oblivion.

"The slow but sure progress of society brings with it many *substitutions* of this sort, in which a less rational principle of action gives way to one that is more so. At the present moment we occupy just that midway position, which, while it allows us to gaze with idle curiosity upon the blood-stained stage of chivalry, and upon the deluged field of lawless ambition, quite forbids that any such modes of conduct should find a place among us as living realities. We are too wise and virtuous to give indulgence to that to which we largely give our admiration! May not yet another step or two be taken on the path of reason, and then we shall cease even to admire that which we have long ceased to tolerate?"

"So already it has actually happened in relation to those malign and sanguinary religious excitements which a few centuries ago enkindled entire communities, and inflamed kings and mendicants, nobles and serfs, priests and wantons, abstracted monks and the dissolute rabble, with one purpose of sacred ambition. Though we now peruse with wonder and curiosity the story (for example) of the Crusades, there are very few readers in the present day—perhaps hardly one, who can rouse up a sympathy with that vehement feeling which was the paramount motive of the enterprise."

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"Thus it appears that the very order of sentiment which once was allowed and lauded as magnanimous, and even divine, we have learned to regard as either purely ridiculous, or as abominable. A like reprobation inevitably awaits (if mankind is really advancing on the road of virtue) every mode of feeling which, being essentially malevolent, draws specious colors from the imagination. That which is true and just, in conduct and character, must at length supplant whatever, if stripped of its decorations, is loathsome or absurd. So certainly as the calm reason of Christianity spreads itself through the world, will the ground fall in beneath the gorgeous but tottering edifice of spurious imaginative virtue. Let but the irresistible process go on a little further, and it will become as impracticable to uphold in credit the still extant opinion which admits of honor without justice or purity, and of magnanimity without benevolence, and of that thirst of glory which is sheer selfishness, as it would be now, after the mechanic arts have reached an unthought-of perfection, to keep in use the cumbrous hand-machines of the last century.

"Much of the conventional law, and many of the usages of private life, and especially the unwritten code of international policy, have yet to undergo a revolution as great perhaps as that which makes the difference between the twelfth and the eighteenth centuries. All the vices, and all the talents, and all the institutions

interested in the preservation of corrupt practices may oppose the advance of this renovation ; but nothing short of the overthrow of Christianity and of civilization can arrest its progress. Nature (we use the word in a religious sense) NATURE is here at work with her noiseless mighty hand ; whatever is spurious is marked already for oblivion, and moves on to its home."

- 2.—*A Solemn Appeal to Christians of all denominations in favor of the cause of Permanent and Universal Peace. By Philanthropos.* Boston : Printed and published for the American Peace Society ; and to be had at the Depositories in Portland, Boston, Hartford, New-York, and Philadelphia. 1836.

This is a pamphlet of thirty-eight octavo pages. It is stereotyped as Tract No. II. of the American Peace Society. It consists of *fourteen* essays, in which the writer develops the reasons why Christians should labor and pray for the abolition of war. The following are some of the reasons ;—war corrupts the morals, and is destructive to the piety of the nations who are engaged in it—it debases and degrades the soldier—it is one of the greatest obstacles to the Temperance Reform—it violates the Sabbath—it promotes licentiousness—profane swearing—and duelling. It is an obstacle to Revivals of Religion—and to the spread of the Gospel.

- 3.—*On the Duty of Females to promote the cause of Peace. By Philanthropos.* Boston, 1836.

This is a pamphlet of forty-eight octavo pages. It was written at the request of many ladies who had often enquired, "What can females do to promote the cause of Peace?" It consists of twelve essays. The writer shows several modes in which female influence may be made available to the promotion of peace. The writer remarks, that "The influence of the female sex on the destinies of the world, is full as great as that of the male sex, though it is not so obvious."—The above mentioned publications ought to be in general circulation.